(b) if so, what was the position during the last two years, year-wise;

(c) whether the deficit is increasing during current year; and

(d) if so, what steps are being taken to contain this trend?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EXPENDITURE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI B. K. GADHVI): (a) and (b) India has been incurring a deficit in the current account of her balance of payments. Current account deficit amounted to Rs. 2852.4 crores in 1984-85 and Rs. 5927.3 crores in 1985-86, the latest year for which full balance of payments data are available.

(c) and (d) In the current year there is likely to be pressure on balance of payments in view of factors, such as, the increase in oil prices. Government has undertaken a number of measures to contain the deficit in the current account of balance of payments within manageable levels by increasing exports and containing imports. The details of Government approach in this regards is contained in the Economic Survey for 1986-87.

Central projects behind schedule

*2036. SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE:
SHRI KAILASH PATI MISHRA:

Will the Minister of PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total cost of overruns as per the latest figures available of all the Central Projects which are behind schedule; and

(b) whether overall accountability and completion responsibility within original estimates, had been assigned to a definite competent authority/agency; if not why and if so, upon whom the accountability for the resulting huge losses has been fixed in each case?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) According to data available on the Quarterly Monitoring System, the total cost overrun of delayed Central Sector projects, consisting more than Rs. 20 crores each, as on 31 March, 1987 with reference to original sanctioned cost is approximately Rs. 20024 crores.

(b) A number of agencies are involved in implementation of the projects. The basic responsibility for completing the project within original estimates-time schedule is that of the Administrative Ministry and the Project Implementation Agency under the Ministry.

L.I.C. scheme for landless labourers

**2037. SHRI N. E. BALARAM:
SHRI SURAJ PRASAD:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal for a Life Insurance Scheme for the landless labourers; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the proposal and the steps being taken in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) and (b) Following the announcement by the Prime Minister on 16th May, 1987 Life Insurance Corporation of India have submitted board outlines of the Scheme under which insurance cover will be made available to all landless agricultural labourers all over the country. This scheme has been approved by Government and suitable instructions have been issued to Life Insurance Corporation of India to start

*Previously Unstarred Question 880 transferred from the 3rd August, 1987.

**Previously Unstarred Question 1121 transferred from the 4th August, 1987.

implementation of the Scheme with effect from 15th August 1987. To begin with, the Scheme will be operated for a period of three years and during this period the entire premium liability will be borne by the Government of India. Under the Scheme which will cover all landless agricultural labourers in India, within the age group of 18 to 60, the Life Insurance Corporation of India will pay a sum of Rs. 1000 to the nominee of the landless agricultural labourer in the event of his death. For such insurance cover, no premium is to be paid by the landless agricultural labourers. LIC, will operate this scheme on a 'no profit no loss' basis as the objective of the Scheme is to provide insurance protection to all landless agricultural labourers.

Use of Rabindra Rangashala

***2038. SHRI N. E. BALARAM:
SHRI SURAJ PRASAD:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the capital's first open air theatre Rabindra Rangashala lies unused for a long time; and

(b) if so, whether Government has any plans to renovate and make use of this theatre for the purpose for which it was built?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) and (b) The theatre has not proved to be very popular with public because of its location. Still it has been used for performances of various types including film shows.

The theatre is being transferred to the Department of Culture, Ministry of Human Resource Development, so that it can be used for cultural activities in a more purposeful manner.

***Previously Unstarred Question 1288, transferred from the 5th August, 1987.

Development of super absorbment polymer

$2039. SHRI AJIT P. K. JOGI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a super absorbment polymer named "Jal Shakti" has been developed by the National Chemical Laboratory, Poona which has the quality to retain water about two hundred times its weight and whether the scientists feel that this will revolutionise agriculture in the country;

(b) if so, what steps are being taken to produce enough quantity of "Jal Shakti" per annum and how it will be made available to the farmers; and

(c) what will be the cost of this polymer and whether it will be subsidised so that the small and landless farmers can make use of this polymer?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Process for manufacture of "Jal Shakti" has been developed by the National Chemical Laboratory, Poona in collaboration with Indian Organic Chemicals Limited, Bombay who has set up a semi-commercial plant having a capacity of two hundred tons per annum. The firm has also obtained Government approval to set up a 5000 ton per annum capacity commercial plant for producing the polymer "Jal Shakti". They are distributing| market testing|selling this product all over India.

(c) The present ex-factory cost of "Jal Shakti" is Rs. 80 per kilo-gram which is expected to come down when production on large scale starts coupled with further R&D efforts. At present there is no subsidy on "Jal Shakti".

$Previously Unstarred Question 1392 transferred from the 7th August, 1987.